

ALABAMA'S HEALTH

A PUBLICATION OF THE ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

Alabama Creates Plan to Help Solve the Opioid Epidemic

The ongoing opioid epidemic has been called the worst drug crisis in American history and its death rate rivals those of AIDS during the 1990's. More people die every day from drug overdoses than from traffic crashes, and the majority of drug overdose deaths are caused by prescription opioids, heroin and synthetic opioids such as fentanyl.

What is an opioid? Opioids are drugs that relieve pain. Some popular examples of opioids are Vicodin, Percocet and Oxycontin. They reduce the intensity of pain signals reaching the brain and affect those brain areas controlling emotion, which diminishes the effects of a painful stimulus. But, they can be highly addictive, just like their chemical cousin, heroin.

Alabama has not escaped the impact of the current opioid drug use epidemic. Of the state's 4.85 million people, more than 5.84 million prescriptions were written in the state in 2015. That averages out to 1.2 prescriptions per man, woman and child in Alabama.

Almost 5 percent of Alabama's population above the age of 17, over 175,000 people, is estimated to have used pain relievers without a medical need. Nearly

30,000 Alabamians, over the age of 17, are estimated to be dependent upon heroin and prescription painkillers. And, for the first time ever in 2015, admissions for opioid use disorders exceeded those for alcohol use disorders.

So, what is Alabama doing to stem the tide of opioid abuse? In August of 2017, Governor Kay Ivey established the Alabama Opioid Overdose and Addiction Council. The co-chairs for the Council were State Health Officer, Dr. Scott Harris; Attorney General Steve Marshall; and Mental Health Commissioner, Lynn Beshear. In their recommendations, they laid out a four-pronged approach to the solving the crisis: Prevention, Intervention, Treatment and Community Responses.

Prevention included modernizing the Prescription Drug Monitoring Program (PDMP). The Alabama PDMP was instituted in 2007 and was developed to promote the public health and welfare by detecting diversion, abuse and misuse of prescription medications. However, after a decade, it needed some improvements to take advantage of technological advances.

"Opioid abuse is a problem for Alabama. That's why I was so proud to carry the Prescription Drug Monitoring Program (PDMP) bill through the Alabama House of Representatives this year," said Alabama House Health Committee Chairwoman April Weaver of Alabaster. Weaver went on to say, "The bill will modernize the PDMP. We will now be able to understand how opioids are prescribed and dispensed, improve training of prescribers and greater access to data so we can better combat the problem. This is a major step in implementing preventative measures."

Intervention included updating drug trafficking laws and, in conjunction with the Alabama Drug Courts, encouraging the use of medicated assisted treatment.

Chairwoman Weaver also sponsored the fentanyl trafficking bill. Representative Weaver said, "We

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On March 1, 2018, Governor Kay Ivey signed the updated PDMP into law. Shown, left to right, Attorney General Steve Marshall, Senator Gerald Dial, Senator Tim Melson, Medical Association of the State of Alabama (MASA) Representative Niko Corley, Senator Billy Beasley, Representative April Weaver, State Health Officer Dr. Scott Harris, Mental Health Commissioner Lynn Beshear and MASA Representative Dickie Whitaker.

Tips From Former Smokers® Campaign Comes to Alabama

Every smoker has a story of why he or she started using tobacco.

For 16-year-old Tiffany, it was the death of her mom, a smoker who died of lung cancer. But when her own daughter turned 16, Tiffany realized she had to quit.

Tiffany shared her story with Alabamians May 23-25 as part of the Centers for Disease Prevention and Control (CDC) Tips From Former Smokers® national media campaign. The campaign features former smokers suffering from the real consequences of smoking. Since 2012, the Tips campaign has inspired thousands of smokers to quit.

At a news conference by satellite, State Health Officer Dr. Scott Harris said, "Nearly \$1 million is spent on tobacco advertising and promotion every hour, so this campaign serves as an important counter. One of the key messages of this campaign is that for every person who dies because of smoking, at least 30 Americans live with a serious smoking-related illness. As a result of this campaign by the CDC, thousands of lives and millions of health care dollars are being saved."

Tobacco use is the leading preventable cause of death and disease in the U.S. More than 21 percent of adult Alabamians are smokers, according to the 2016 Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance Survey. Some 8,600 adults in the state die from smoking-related illnesses each year. The annual health care costs in Alabama directly caused by smoking total nearly \$2 billion.

"Smokers who quit, regardless of age, increase their longevity; those who quit by age 30 live an average 10 years longer than if they had continued to smoke," Ginny Campbell, Alabama government relations director for the American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network, Inc., said. "Smoking cessation reduces the risk of developing lung and other smoking-related cancers as well as many other diseases caused by smoking and improves the health of cancer survivors."

There is free help for Alabamians who want to quit. The Alabama Tobacco Quitline, 1-800-Quit Now, or www.quitnowalabama.com, is a free telephone and online resource to help tobacco users quit. The service provides a quit plan, up to four scheduled counseling calls, and up to eight weeks of nicotine replacement therapy patches if the caller is enrolled in the counseling program and medically eligible. The Quitline is open from 6 a.m. to midnight every day.



From left, Ginny Campbell, Alabama Government Relations Director, American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network, Inc., Tiffany and State Health Officer Dr. Scott Harris.



Tobacco control coordinators joined Tips spokesperson Tiffany. Shown, front row, left to right, Lonnie Pressley, Melanie Dickens; back row, Faye Royal, Michelle Lassey, Tiffany and Sonya Tinsley.

Alabama Department of Public Health

Mission

To promote, protect, and improve the health of individuals and communities in Alabama.

Vision Statement

The Alabama Department of Public Health will lead the state in assuring the health of Alabamians by promoting healthy, safe, prepared, and informed communities.

Value Statement

The Alabama Department of Public Health believes that all people have a right to be healthy. Our core values are the provision of high-quality services, a competent and professional workforce, and delivering compassionate care.

Alabama's Health

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Scott Harris, M.D., M.P.H. State Health Officer

Jamey Durham, M.B.A. Director, Bureau of Prevention, Promotion, and Support

Arrol Sheehan, M.A. Editor

Noelle Ahmann Graphic Designer

are fighting the opioid epidemic on many fronts. By addressing the fentanyl weights in the legislation, we are able to differentiate dealers from users. Our goal is to get the suppliers.” Representative Weaver went on to say, “It’s a multi-faceted solution to a very complicated problem.”

Treatment strategies include increased access to care for those with an opioid addiction and utilization of evidence-based practices to improve the diagnosis and treatment of those with substance use disorder.

Community response strategies include expanding the access to naloxone, and expanding relationships with businesses, educational institutions, and community organizations and leaders. Senator Gerald Dial announced in May that Alabama would be the recipient of a \$12 million, three-year grant for a naloxone auto-injector kit from drug maker Kaleo. Naloxone can reverse the effects of an overdose and restore breathing. The kits will now be available in 872 rescue vehicles throughout the state.

State Health Officer Dr. Scott Harris said, “Governor Ivey’s Opioid Council was a team effort. I thank my fellow co-chairs for coming together to develop a plan to solve the opioid crisis. Legislative leaders like

Chairwoman April Weaver, Chairman Senator Jim McClendon and Senator Gerald Dial of Lineville have taken our recommendations and immediately went to work in the Legislature. We also appreciated the support of Senator Billy Beasley and Representative Elaine Beech, who both served on the Opioid Council.” Dr. Harris went on to say, “I am confident we will see a reduction in opioid fatalities and I am honored to have been a part of this effort.”

By **MIKE MCCRADY**
Governmental Relations Manager

Mike McCrady joined ADPH in December 2017 as governmental relations manager. Mike is no stranger to politics after spending the past 20 years in governmental relations, political campaigns and business. He is married to Montgomery native Leah Chambliss McCrady and they have two sons. When not roaming the halls of the Statehouse, Mike likes to spend his time playing golf, surfing or just spending time with his family.



Helping Save Lives By Reversing Opioid Overdoses: Donation Made to First Responders

Volunteer fire and rescue squads in Alabama have another tool to save lives through a grant donation from Kaleo Pharmaceuticals to supply each rescue squad vehicle in the state with a case of the Evzio® medication. County health departments will assist by storing the medication locally until needed by the fire and rescue squads.

Evzio® is a prescription medicine used in adults and children for the treatment of an opioid emergency such as an overdose or a possible overdose. The medication is to be given right away and does substitute for emergency medical care, even if the person wakes up.

Volunteer first responders are being trained on how to use the drug in eight sessions throughout the state during May. A kit of medication is available for each of the first responders’ vehicles operated by volunteer fire and rescue squads. The Evzio device auto-injects the opioid overdose prevention drug naloxone and plays a voice recording that talks an untrained layperson through the steps to administer the lifesaving drug.

In announcing the donation, State Sen. Gerald Dial said, “Their gift will save lives across Alabama. Regardless of how one becomes addicted to opioids, it is a loss to our families, communities and future. Our rural communities are often 30 minutes or more from a hospital. A majority of the time, volunteer fire and rescue organizations are the first to respond to an opioid overdose, so access is crucial.”

In December 2016, the department issued a standing order to ensure the availability of naloxone to any person who is at risk of experiencing an opioid-related overdose. Pharmacists may dispense naloxone to patients or family members based on the standing order signed by the State Health Officer.

State Health Officer Dr. Scott Harris said, “In accordance with our mission to promote and protect the health of every citizen of our state, this standing order effectively serves as a prescription for naloxone for those unable to obtain the treatment from their regular healthcare provider or another source.”

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Health Care Workers Receive Biosafety Training

In March, the Alabama Department of Public Health's Center for Emergency Preparedness hosted a training that focused on biosafety and infectious disease operations for health care workers. This course was presented by UAB's Deep South Biosafety Worker Training Program and was held at the Alabama Fire College in Tuscaloosa.

The participants gained practical, hands-on skills used to protect themselves when responding to infectious disease threats. Basic biosafety knowledge and the understanding of personal protective equipment were the focus of this training. The target audience was responders who are involved in mass fatality response in Alabama.

Members of SMORT (the State Mortuary Operations Response Team) include coroners, funeral directors, health administrators, emergency managers, law enforcement, EMS and volunteers of various backgrounds. The Alabama Department of Public Health (ADPH) is the lead agency for fatality management and is responsible for responding to disasters where a large number of people are deceased. It is also the department's responsibility to train and protect staff and volunteers when they respond to such disasters and to give them the training and equipment to keep them safe.

"It is of utmost importance that our response staff be trained to protect themselves when conducting recovery missions. The safety of personnel takes precedence over all. This course is key to staff understanding the precautions that must be taken to stay safe and accomplish their tasks," Tim Hatch, deputy director of Emergency Preparedness and the state's Fatality Management coordinator, said.

Attendees participated in an 8-hour class where they reviewed infectious diseases, universal precautions, and learned to don (put on) and doff (take off) personal protective gear properly and without risk to themselves or other responders. Participants had online prerequisite courses that had to be completed prior to the classroom training. There were over 30 SMORT team members and ADPH staff in attendance. This event was made possible with federal funding through the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences.

A big thank you to UAB, Andres Viles (trainer) and Elana Kidd (course coordinator) for arranging and conducting this much needed training.

By TIM HATCH



Deputy Director Tim Hatch, Center for Emergency Preparedness, and Scott Belton, Alabama Department of Forensic Sciences, don their personal protective gear.



The course covered basic biosafety knowledge and practical skills and precautions needed in responding to infectious disease threats.

'Stop the Bleed' Training Saves Lives

Jacob Fannin is passionate about preventing needless death and loss of life after active shooter situations and injuries ranging from chain saw accidents to motor vehicle crashes and the importance of preparing immediate medical response. The risk management coordinator for the City of Troy is nationally recognized for promoting the first annual National Stop the Bleed Week that is observed in all 50 states and "is intended to cultivate grassroots efforts that encourage bystanders to become trained, equipped, and empowered to help in a bleeding emergency before professional help arrives."

Fannin has trained a majority of Troy City employees. As state coordinator Fannin oversees 9 instructors statewide, who conducted 30 classes and trained 809 students in the lifesaving procedure during National Stop the Bleed Day. This information was born on the battlefield and is now used by church security teams and others. He wrote the following article excerpted from the Alabama Municipal Insurance Corporation newsletter that describes actions anyone can take to respond after trauma situations.

Post-Event

The post-event phase should include medical response preparation. Following an active shooter situation, being prepared for an immediate medical response by co-workers on the scene can mean "life or death" for victims. Victims can and do die from arterial bleeding in the minutes prior to the arrival of trained medical personnel. The average human can bleed to death from a severed artery in less than three minutes. When the smoke settles following an active shooter, terrorist attack, etc. there WILL be people lying on the ground bleeding – possibly bleeding to death. That person could be you. This is the missing link in what has been proven to be preventable deaths nationwide following these events. The police train to respond and neutralize the threat, not to treat the wounded. While this block of time passes, why are we not treating ourselves?

Just as your action plan includes policy, planning and equipment from the first pre-event stage, so should your overall response. Unfortunately, no amount of preparation and defenses can prevent an incident such as this; however, training will always be our defining response. As victims of mass violence, do we "rise to the occasion" or simply fall back to our level of training? Train your employees, then train them some more! Stopping the bleed is key at this event stage.

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Death due to traumatic bleeding can occur in less than five minutes, even though everyone has the power to stop it. Marking Stop the Bleed Day at the Pike County Health Department, left to right, are Chronic Disease Division Director Sondra Reese, Office of Community Affairs Director Carolyn Bern, District Clinic Director Johna Cotton, DNP,CRNP, Southeastern District, and Jacob Fannin.



Jacob Fannin applies a tourniquet to Carolyn Bern. The training course stresses the need to apply tourniquets high and tight to stop extremity bleeding. The tourniquet should be placed as high on the limb as possible (avoiding joints) and tight enough to stop the bleed. Fannin also conducted a Stop the Bleed Familiarization Course in a May 17 satellite conference.

ALPHA Recognizes Leaders for Exceptional Merit

The Alabama Public Health Association recently honored several public health employees for exceptional merit in the field of public health during its 62nd Annual Meeting and Health Education Conference, held in Prattville April 4-6.

The D.G. Gill Award was presented to **Tim Hatch, M.P.A., R.E.H.S.**, director of the Logistics and Environmental Programs for the Center for Emergency Preparedness. This award is intended to honor an individual who has made an exceptional contribution to public health in Alabama. Supporters described Hatch as “the epitome of what an emergency preparedness worker should be,” and lauded his work as a nationally and internationally recognized expert in disaster and emergency management.



Tim Hatch

The Guy M. Tate Award, presented annually to a public health employee, group, or agency with 10 years or less in public health for outstanding service to public health, was presented to **Carrie Allison**. Mrs. Allison is the department’s accreditation coordinator. Supporters noted her diligent efforts over the last three years in leading ADPH to receive full accreditation from the Public Health Accreditation Board, which it received in June of 2017. Mrs. Allison was praised for keeping the overall goal of improving programs and services for the citizens of Alabama at the forefront of the process.



Carrie Allison

The Virginia Kendrick Award, recognizing individuals who have provided notable service to the people of Alabama while in a supporting role in the field of public health, was presented to **Kratina Cunningham**, a disease intervention specialist in the Southwestern District, working in Baldwin, Conecuh, Escambia and Washington counties. Mrs. Cunningham, who works with clients dealing with sexually transmitted diseases, was



Kratina Cunningham

recognized for her ability to handle the tremendous workload associated with her role with high levels of compassion and excellence.

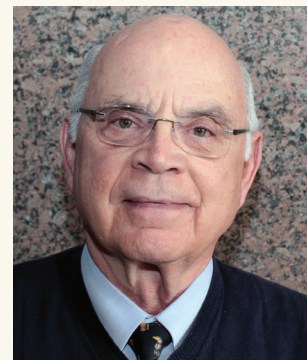
The Frederick S. Wolf Award recognizes an individual who has been active in public health at the local level and who has demonstrated efficiency, dedication and professionalism in the delivery of public health services, and who has provided unselfish community services in areas unrelated to public health. This year’s winner is **Deborah Grim** of the Coffee County Health Department.



Deborah Grim

Mrs. Grim has been with the Coffee County Health Department since 1989. Supporters singled out her efficiency and professionalism, along with her compassionate and cheerful outlook, when nominating her for the award. In addition to her work with the health department, Mrs. Grim is a frequent and welcome presence at the local animal shelter, where she offers her trademark generosity to animals of all kinds.

Bob Hinds, director of the Behavioral Health Division, Bureau of Prevention, Promotion and Support, was the recipient of the Ira L. Myers Award for Excellence in Public Health. This award was established to recognize an individual, group or organization who, through excellence in work, has made



Bob Hinds

a significant impact on some aspect of public health in Alabama. Hinds was recognized for his work in numerous areas of public health during his 19-year career with ADPH, including stints with the Alabama Child Death Review System, the Alabama Newborn Screening Division, and his current role, through which he works with the multiple programs included in the Tobacco Control and Prevention Branch, the FDA Inspection Branch, the Fatality Review Branch, and the Injury Prevention Branch.

Supporters praised Hinds as the “gold standard” of leadership and excellence in public health, and described him as a supervisor who “nurtures, supports and inspires his staff.”

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With minimal training and equipment, your employees can provide immediate treatment to themselves and others. The application of a tourniquet (TQ) to an extremity; wound packing junctional areas of the body; and placing an unresponsive victim into the recovery position (opening the airway) can and WILL save lives. Direct pressure will always be the first and most obvious line of defense. However, in these scenarios, it is rare that direct pressure will stop a life-threatening bleed.

A clear majority of people who bleed to death as a result of lethal force encounters do so from their extremities. These may respond well to a TQ. We can identify a life-threatening bleed based on these characteristics: bright red blood leaving the body at a high rate of speed, pulsatile bleeding, heavily blood-soaked clothing or large areas of pooled blood.

In extremity bleeding, place the TQ “high and tight” – as high on the limb as possible (avoiding joints) and tight enough to stop the bleed. For areas of the body that do not respond well to a TQ, a combination of wound packing and direct pressure is required. These are referred to as junctional wounds. These wounds should be packed with either a hemostatic or plain sterile gauze to create an internal pressure, then allowed several minutes to create a clot with direct pressure. Pressure dressings can be used here to assist with the required direct pressure. This intervention “fills the void” created by the bullet or other material that caused the wound channel.

For victims that have been treated and are conscious or semi-conscious, allow them to assume the most comfortable position, including sitting up. For victims who may be completely unresponsive CPR would typically not be an option in these scenarios. Unconscious victims should be placed in the recovery position.

A Stop the Bleed class will take approximately four hours to complete and is very affordable – especially considering the alternative. Classes can be found at www.bleedingcontrol.org. Stop the Bleed kits and their individual components are also available online from reputable businesses.

Active Shooter Incident Strategies Explored

Workplace violence has taken a heavy toll in 2018. Employees working in agencies and businesses in the RSA Tower learned strategies to improve chances of survival in an active shooter incident at a presentation on April 26. Awareness of one’s environment and preparation are key.



The recipient of the Anne M. Smith Public Health Nurse of the Year Award must exemplify the mission of public health nursing



Lynn Jacobs

in Alabama, which is “to assure conditions in which individuals, families and communities can be healthy utilizing the unique expertise of public health nurses to assess, plan and implement, and prevent disease.” This year’s recipient is **Lynn Jacobs**, clinic nursing supervisor at the Randolph County Health Department. Supporters described Mrs. Jacobs as someone who approaches both her clients and her staff with kindness and respect, and who utilizes problem-solving skills to ensure the highest quality of patient care.

In addition to these awards, two ALPHA members were inducted into the association’s Hall of Fame, Class of 2018:



Stacey B.

Stacey B. Adams

Adams and Tim Hatch. The Hall of Fame recognizes individuals who have made outstanding contributions to the enhancement and advancement of the association. Mrs. Adams is the administrator of the West Central District.

By BLU GILLIAND

Mark your calendars for the 63rd Annual Meeting and Education conference, scheduled for April 3-5, 2019.

Dr. Karen Landers Presented James H. Baker Exemplar Award

While wearing many different hats through the years, nominators for the James H. Baker Exemplar Award said Dr. Karen Landers has filled her role with Alabama Department of Public Health (ADPH) with integrity and extreme devotion. While embarking on her career with ADPH in 1982, she did not realize the significant impact she would make with the Tuberculosis (TB) Control Division.

This dedication is evidenced by late-night e-mails to follow up on TB problems or concerns, making home visits even on Sunday, serving as TB spokesperson for town hall meetings and physician liaison, the list goes on and on. She is “always hands-on, an advocate, as well as morale booster” as one person noted. Other members of the TB Division praised her by saying, “I appreciate the opportunity to work with Dr. Landers; her kindness, caring and concern for our patients shows every day. She truly is an angel in disguise.”

Even though she has gained the title of “Lock’em up Landers,” for her relentless attempts to keep the most difficult patients compliant; her commitment is evident. “Dr. Landers has a passion for people that is undeniable and her love for helping patients with TB is praiseworthy,” as one supporter stated.

For her tremendous contribution to the program, Dr. Landers was recently named the recipient of the 2018 James H Baker Exemplar Award. This award is presented annually to a Division of TB Control staff member who best represents the standard of professional excellence and dedication to public health set by Baker, a retired X-ray technician in the division



Dr. Karen Landers is congratulated by Pam Barrett, left, and Susan Wiggins, right.

who served for 40 years. The intent of the award is to foster excellence in public health by the annual nomination and selection of a staff member who best reflects the “can do” attitude for which Baker is known.

Former State Health Officer Dr. Donald Williamson established the James H. Baker Exemplar Award in 2004. Baker continues to be involved in the nomination and selection process.

We salute you Dr. Landers, well deserved!

*By SUSAN WIGGINS, RN
TB Program Manager, Southeastern District*

National Walk @ Lunch Day Promotes Wellness

The annual Employee Health and Fitness Walk teamed up with National Walk @ Lunch Day on April 13. Chauntye’ Williams and Coronda Judkins are shown after making a brisk walk. This day is aimed at promoting awareness of the benefits of physical activity and improving overall employee health and wellness. This event is sponsored by State Employees’ Insurance Board, Governor’s Commission on Physical Fitness and Sports, ASF Foundation, Blue Cross Blue Shield of Alabama, City of Montgomery and Alabama Department of Public Health.



Tulane University Honors Dr. Bernard H. Eichold

The School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine at Tulane University named Dr. Bernard “Bert” H. Eichold II Alumni of the Year on March 24. The Mobile native has obtained multiple academic degrees from Tulane, and over the years, he has remained active with his Tulane service. He has been health officer for Mobile County since May 1990.

“It is an honor to be selected for this award,” Dr. Eichold said. “Without my education, I could not have served as many persons and organizations.”

Dr. Eichold served his country in the U.S. Navy, retiring with the rank of Captain, F.S. M.C. He served the Alabama Public Health Association in numerous capacities, including president in 1996. He was inducted into the ALPHA Hall of Fame in 2016.

In addition to his medical duties, he has been very active in many civic organizations. Some include, but are not limited to, Mobile United, BIG, Mobile ARC, Chair of the Community Foundation of South Alabama Board and is currently on the vestry of Christ Church Cathedral.

Dr. Eichold has been an instructor at Tulane and adjunct professor of medicine at the University of South Alabama. He has served as a science advisor and mentor

to young scientists in the NASA DEVELOP program based at the Mobile County Health Department. He is senior aviation medical examiner for the Federal Aviation Administration. He has received NASA and U.S. Navy medals, various civic/community awards and is a fellow of the American College of Physicians.

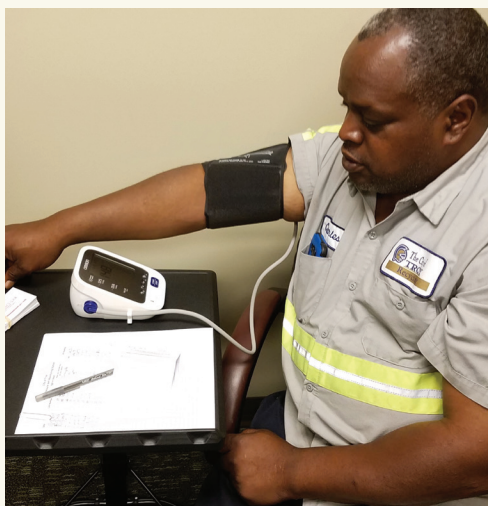


Introducing Dr. Eichold, at left, at the awards presentation was Dean Pierre Buekins, M.D., Ph.D., the director of the Office of Global Health and the director of the Center for Emerging Reproductive Epidemiology at the School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine at Tulane University.

Troy Employees Use New Blood Pressure Self-monitoring Stations

May is National Stroke Awareness Month, and it was fitting that the City of Troy installed new blood pressure self-monitoring stations in May. This was possible thanks to the Pike County Health Department, the Office of Community Affairs, and the Cardiovascular Program of the Bureau of Prevention,

Promotion, and Support. Currently three monitoring sites have been established in Troy: the Troy Police Department, Environmental Services Department and City Hall. Numerous employees have been using the stations, and only positive feedback has been received both verbally and via email.



Alabama EMS Celebrates a Culture of Excellence

The Alabama Department of Public Health recognized the 44th annual National EMS Week, initially authorized by President Gerald Ford in 1974. The annual national event pays tribute to America's EMS practitioners and the important work they perform within the health care system. Governor Kay Ivey signed a proclamation recognizing the special state theme, "Alabama EMS: A Culture of Excellence."

"Older Alabamians can remember the days before our modern EMS system was established," said Dr. Harris regarding the week's observance. "In those days, nothing was standardized; few tools and little knowledge were available to ambulance crews. A patient arriving at a hospital may have been cared for by a surgeon, a general practitioner or a resident moonlighting in the emergency room."

Dr. Harris explained, "Even in rural areas, today's ambulances in Alabama are well-equipped, state-of-the-art medical units, and are attended by providers who are qualified and experienced in emergency care." Dr. Harris agreed that the EMS system in Alabama focuses upon teamwork and quality improvement.

"The training continuously improves at all levels, from EMTs and paramedics in prehospital care, to nurses and physicians in the emergency departments and beyond."

Stephen Wilson, an experienced paramedic and acting director of the Office of Emergency Medical Services, echoed Dr. Harris' sentiments. "The Alabama emergency medical technician today is trained and equipped to efficiently and effectively perform emergency care better than the paramedics that were licensed in the 1970's."

Wilson explained, "Every level of provider is now better prepared for a wide variety of patient care needs. With continued education and board certification, a paramedic can now be designated as a critical care paramedic, which would allow him or her to provide the highest level of care to the citizens of Alabama."

"EMS practitioners demonstrate a profound commitment to their communities and continue to serve Alabama daily," Wilson explained. "During EMS Week, let us celebrate and support the EMS professionals in Alabama and let's thank them for their efforts and sacrifice."



A group of emergency medical services providers joined State Health Officer Dr. Scott Harris, Office of EMS Medical Director Dr. Elwin Crawford and Office of EMS Acting Director Stephen Wilson in celebrating National Emergency Medical Services Week, May 21-25.

Program Manager Recognized

Jamey Durham, left, director of the Bureau of Prevention, Promotion, and Support, presents the bureau's quarterly Star Trophy to Michael A. Smith, M.P.A., for his achievements during the second quarter of 2018. Smith is program manager of the Medicare Rural Hospital Flexibility Program (Flex) and the Small Rural Hospital Improvement Program (SHIP) in the Office of Primary Care and Rural Health.



Employees 'Mix It Up'

The Office of Minority Health (OMH) sponsored two "Mix It Up" events in observance of April, National Minority Health Month 2018. OMH staff conducted an event on April 6 and unveiled the state's theme going forward, "Alabama Better Together: Building Equity So Everyone Wins." Lecia Brooks of the Southern Poverty Law Center facilitated an event on April 20 which asked ADPH employees to look at different aspects of their identities and encouraged communication and adherence to the national theme of "Partnering for Health Equity." Among the topics explored at both events were the different interpretations people have about others they perceive to be different from themselves.



RSA Tower Goes Teal

The RSA Tower was lit in teal to raise awareness of April as Sexual Assault Awareness Month. Sexual violence is a devastating national and statewide problem that impacts the lives of many women, men and children each year. Nationally, every 98 seconds someone in the United States is sexually assaulted. In Alabama, 5.4 rapes are reported daily. Help is available for victims of sexual violence. In addition to contacting a law enforcement agency and seeking help at a hospital, victims may contact one of the rape crisis centers in their area or call 1-800-656-4673 (HOPE) to be connected to the nearest center. Employees wore teal on April 13 as a reminder to victim survivors that they are not alone and sexual violence must be eradicated.



Commendations

If you would like to praise employees for their accomplishments, send letters of commendation to the State Health Officer or the employee's supervisor and a copy by e-mail to Arrol.Sheehan@adph.state.al.us for inclusion in this list. Four items are needed: the employee's name, work unit, name of the person making the commendation, and his or her city and state.

Lynn Harrell

Washington County Health Department
from Renae Carpenter; Camden, Ala.

Jennifer Johnson

Montgomery County Health Department
from Tracy Taylor; Valley, Ala.

Department Focuses on Men's Health Throughout June

The Alabama Department of Public Health joined in the celebration of June as National Men's Health Month and June 11-17 as Men's Health Week by encouraging men and boys to take steps to become healthier, stronger and make their health a priority. June 15 was Wear Blue for Men's Health Day, a day to use the #ShowUsYourBlue hashtag in support of men's health. Several departmental programs offered educational materials and incentive items to the public on June 15. Programs participated in health fairs, distributed materials to faith-based organizations and groups, and appeared on a television talk show. The public was invited to an outdoor event to heighten awareness of preventable health problems and encourage early detection and treatment of disease among men and boys. Men were encouraged to pay special attention to signs and symptoms such as chest pain, shortness of breath, excessive thirst, and problems with urination and see their doctor at once if these occurred.

Enthusiastic vendors came together from both outside and within the department to sponsor a Men's Health

celebration in the RSA Park on June 28. The public was invited to the fun-filled event that included a football toss, music, games, free goodies, and fruit and vegetables. The event was sponsored by the **iChoices** Wellness Program and the Alabama Office of Minority Health.



State Health Officer Pays Visit to Mobile County Health Department

Dr. Bernard H. Eichold II, Mobile County health officer, welcomed State Health Officer Dr. Scott Harris at his first official visit on February 21. Pictured from left to right are Dr. Eichold, Dr. Harris, Kelly Warren, Dr. Stephanie Woods-Crawford and Mike McCrady. The group toured the Eight Mile Health Center that opened in October 2017. The 11,900-square-foot facility features state-of-the-art exam rooms and offers expanded services to include X-ray, behavioral health, and WIC drive-through pickup to meet the needs of this growing community.



Environmental Services Q and A

The following questions were submitted from the public to our website, and were answered by members of the Bureau of Environmental Services staff.

INQUIRY: Are restaurants allowed to reheat a customer's food? I have seen this done and wonder if it is allowed.

RESPONSE: Under the Alabama Rules for Food Establishments, food that is sold to a customer may be returned and reheated if given back to that same customer, not poured in or mixed in with food being served to others, and not resold or reserved to another customer.

INQUIRY: A waiter at a local restaurant was putting silverware into napkins without wearing gloves. Is this permitted?

RESPONSE: According to the Food Rules of Alabama, a food employee is not required to wear gloves while handling clean silverware, but he/she must wash his/her hands before handling clean utensils.

INQUIRY: Does a food service establishment have to use commercial ovens and other equipment?

RESPONSE: Generally speaking, it is recommended that equipment in food establishments be commercial-type in order to properly maintain the required food temperatures for hot and cold holding (less than 41 degrees F and greater than 135 degrees F), cooking, reheating, etc. More specific information can be found in a document on our website titled "General Information on Starting a Restaurant Business in Alabama" at the link below: <http://www.alabamapublichealth.gov/foodsafety/assets/StartingaRestaurantAlabama.pdf>

Overdose, continued from page 3

At a news conference on May 2, Alabama Emergency Management Agency Director Brian Hastings stated, "I am so proud to be a part of another team effort to build an Alabama opioid-antagonist program to combat the opioid crisis. Powerful private-public partnerships like this with Kaleo Pharma increase the lifesaving capability of our volunteer organizations and are a critical part of the whole of government and community effort required to help addicts and families heal from this national scourge."

According to Susan Alverson, executive secretary, Alabama Board of Pharmacy, naloxone comes in a variety of dosage forms and each requires instructions for administration. She stated, "Further, patients may have various reactions after receiving the drug, and the person administering the drug should be prepared. Since naloxone is short acting and the patient may have used large amounts of opioids, repeat administration of naloxone may be necessary."

A three-minute DVD instructs users on how to administer the device. A pamphlet describing how to recognize and respond to opioid overdose, "Opioid Overdose Recognition and Response Guide," is also being provided.

Symptoms of an opioid overdose are as follows:

- Slow breathing (less than 1 breath every 5 seconds) or no breathing
- Vomiting
- Pale and clammy face
- Blue lips, fingernails or toenails
- Slow, erratic or no pulse
- Snoring or gurgling noises while asleep or nodding off
- No response when the person's name is yelled or the middle of the person's chest is rubbed with knuckles

The guide emphasizes that a suspected opioid overdose is a medical emergency and to call 911 immediately.

Dr. Harris concluded, "It is our expectation that improving access to naloxone will result in improved outcomes for individuals at risk for opioid-related overdose. That being said, an approach that combines medication with behavioral therapy is considered critical to achieving improved long-term outcomes for recovering substance abusers."

For more information, contact Stephen Wilson, Office of Emergency Medical Services, at (334) 206-5383.



Jamie Gray of the Office of Emergency Medical Services demonstrates how the autoinjector device is used to administer naloxone.

Retirees

The following departmental employees have retired recently:

March

Beverly Armstrong
Northern District
Reginald Bell
West Central District
Valerie Cochran
Field Operations
Beverly Cosby
Northeastern District
Dena Donovan
Family Health Services
Samuel Phillips
Southeastern District
Rosemary Robertson
Southwestern District
Vickie Taylor
Northern District
Elizabeth Todd
Family Health Services

Brenda Rogers
Northern District
Lucy Toney
Northern District
Darlene Wallace
Northeastern District

May

Rhonda Brewer
Northern District
Linda Brown
Jefferson District
Deborah Curran
Southeastern District
Selena Dreadin
Southwestern District
Nancy Hunter
Southwestern District
Denise Myslak
Northern District
Brenda Vaughn
Immunization

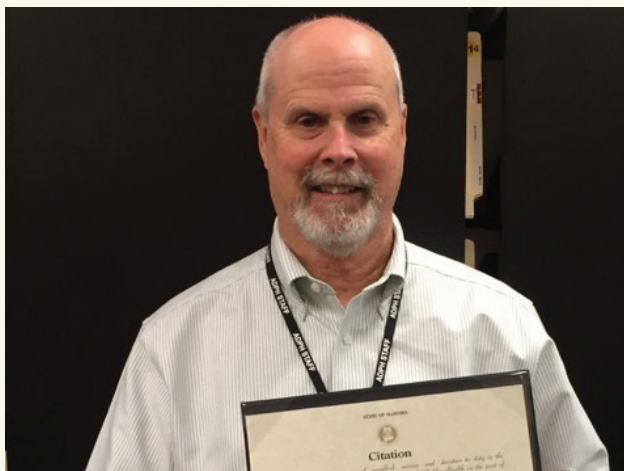
June

Joan Bell
Southeastern District
Joan Davis
Southeastern District
Lanis Jackson
West Central District
Lois Lamarque
East Central District
Cynthia Lawford
Southeastern District
Martha Sanchez
Infectious Diseases & Outbreaks
Sylvia Worthy
Northeastern District

April
Sandra Adair
Northern District
Wade Bobo
Northeastern District
Mary Anne Cates
Northern District
Lydia Davis
Northern District
Billy Hall
Mobile Lab
Patricia Oyler
Northeastern District
Betty Paige
West Central District
Patricia Patterson
Northeastern District



Coworkers in the Behavioral Health Division, Bureau of Prevention, Promotion, and Support, surprised Bob Hinds with a retirement reception on May 11. He is shown with Jabari Sullen at right.



Bill Kelly, public health environmental supervisor with the Baldwin County Health Department, retired effective May 1 with more than 19 years of service.



Coworkers honored Dr. Pamela Moody Sullivan upon her retirement from the Southwestern District effective June 1. District Administrator Chad Kent presented her with a retirement certificate.



Ronnie Moore, area administrator in the Northern District, third from left, retired April 1 after 37 years of service. He is shown with Director of Field Operations Ricky Elliott, State Health Officer Dr. Scott Harris and Chief Medical Officer Dr. Mary McIntyre.

DIVERSITY

WHAT IS DIVERSITY?

The definition of diversity is broad; it includes legally protected categories as well as those characteristics that make individuals unique. Diversity covers differences among people concerning where they are from and where they have lived, as well as their differences of thought and life experiences.

Protected categories include characteristics such as:

- National origin
- Religion
- Language
- Sexual orientation
- Race
- Gender identity
- Color
- Socioeconomic status
- Disability
- Veteran status
- Ethnicity
- Family structures
- Gender
- Age



Workplace diversity is a collection of individual attributes that together help agencies pursue organizational objectives efficiently and effectively. It is more than a legal or moral essential; it is a business essential for public service.



Equal Employment Officer Larry Sailes is welcomed to the Employment Relations Section of the Office of Human Resources by Donna Barron, at left, and Danita Rose.

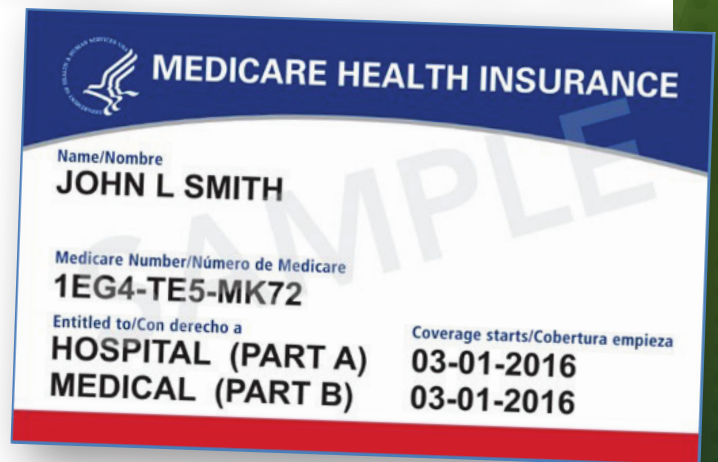
Effective July 2, 2018, the Office of Human Resources, Employee Relations Section, is pleased to welcome Larry Sailes as the Equal Employment Officer. Larry brings more than 20 years of experience to the Employee Relations Section, having wide variety of skill sets in Human Resources. His previous assignment was with Still Serving Veterans, as the Veteran Career & Transition Manager. Larry served 20 plus years of honorable service in the United States Navy, retiring at the rank of Chief Petty Officer. His most notable duty was serving at the Pentagon in Washington, D.C., on September 11, 2001, during the attack on our nation.

By *DANITA ROSE*

New Medicare Cards Arriving Summer 2018

7 things to know about your new Medicare card:

- **Your Medicare Number is unique:** Your card has a new number instead of your Social Security Number.
- **Your new card is paper:** Paper cards are easier for many providers to use and copy, and they save taxpayers a lot of money.
- **Destroy your old Medicare card:** Do not discard the old card, until you have used the new one, to ensure it works with healthcare providers.
- **Keep your new card with you:** Carry your new card and show it to your health care providers when you need care.
- **You can find your number:** If you forget your new card, you, your doctor or other health care provider may be able to lookup your Medicare Number online.
- **Keep your Medicare Advantage Card:** If you're in a Medicare Advantage Plan (like an HMO or PPO), your Medicare Advantage Plan ID card is your main card for Medicare – you should still keep and use it whenever you need care. However, you also may be asked to show your new Medicare card, so you should carry this card too.
- **Help is available:** If you don't get your new Medicare card by April 2019, call 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227). TTY users can call 1-877-486-2048.



Be on the lookout for SCAMS with the new Medicare card

Don't give personal information to get your card. Medicare will never call you uninvited and ask you to give personal information over the phone. Scam artists may try to get personal information (like your current Medicare Number) by contacting you about your new card. Medicare will also never make a home visit.

Don't pay for your new card. If someone asks you for your information, for money, or threatens to cancel your health benefits if you don't share your personal information, hang up and call us at 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227) or your Senior Medicare Patrol at your local Area Agency on Aging at 1-800-243-5463.

Guard your card: Only give your new Medicare Number to doctors, pharmacists, other health care providers, your insurers, or people you trust to work with Medicare on your behalf.



This project was supported, in part by grant number 90MP0238 from the U.S. Administration for Community Living, Department of Health and Human Services, Washington, D.C. 20201 and the Alabama Department of Senior Services.